

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAIRO 09452 131303Z

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5182

INFO AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA

UNCLAS CAIRO 9452

AMCONSUL PORT SAID SENDS.

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SWEL, EG

SUBJECT: MEDICAL SERVICES PORT SAID

QUOTE

1. MEDICAL SERVICES IN PORT SAID ARE AT BEST LIMITED DUE TO LACK OF FACILITIES, EQUIPMENT, AND TRAINED SUPPORT STAFF, I.E., NURSES, LAB TECHNICIANS, ETC. POST'S CONCERN WITH THIS SITUATION WAS ALLEVIATED BY HIGH REGARD WHICH FOREIGN COMMUNITY HAS FOR LOCALLY TRAINED DOCTORS.

2. TWO RECENT INCIDENTS HAVE, HOWEVER, RAISED SOME DOUBTS ABOUT QUALITY OF MEDICAL SERVICES AVAILABLE IN PORT SAID. TWICE IN PAST WEEK I HAVE BECOME AWARE OF GROSS EXAMPLES OF MISDIAGNOSIS, ONE NEARLY RESULTING IN UNNECESSARY MAJOR SURGERY. IN THIS CASE INDIAN SEAWOMAN WAS DIAGNOSED BY PHYSICIAN IN GOVERNMENT HOSPITAL AS HAVING ACUTE APPENDICITIS. INTERVENTION BY INDIAN CONSUL GENERAL RESULTED IN SEAWOMAN'S TRANSFER TO PRIVATE CLINIC WHERE DOCTORS FOUND HER TO BE SUFFERING FROM A GASTRIC INFECTION, FOR WHICH SHE WAS TREATED AND RELEASED IN AN HOUR.

3. SECOND INCIDENT INVOLVED US SEAMAN WITH LEG INJURY, DIAGNOSED AS FRACTURED TIBIA BY PHYSICIAN IN GOVERNMENT HOSPITAL. AT SEAMAN'S REQUEST, I ARRANGED HIS TRANSFER TO PRIVATE CLINIC WHERE FRACTURE TURNED OUT TO BE BADLY STRAINED MUSCLE. PLASTER CAST PLACE ON LEG AT HOSPITAL WAS BROKEN AFTER

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 CAIRO 09452 131303Z

TWO DAYS DUE TO LACK OF PROPER ARCH SUPPORT APPLIANCE.

4. IN VIEW OF ABOVE, I STRONGLY RECOMMEND THAT DEPARTMENT TAKE NECESSARY STEPS TO ADVISE OWNERS OF US FLAG VESSELS TRANSITING SUEZ CANAL OR CALLING ON PORT SAID TO INSTRUCT THEIR LOCAL AGENTS TO PLACE ALL SICK OR INJURED SEAMEN IN DELEVRAND HOSPITAL, UNDER CARE OF DR. RAYMOND TAWIL.

5. THIS CLINIC IS A SMALL, CLEAN, IN-PATIENT FACILITY WITH OLD BUT ADEQUATE EQUIPMENT. IT IS STAFFED BY CATHOLIC NUNS TRAINED IN NURSING. DR. TAWIL IS A CONCIENTIOUS, LOCALLY TRAINED PHYSICIAN AND SURGEON WHO HAS TREATED THE CITY'S FOREIGN COMMUNITY AND MERCHANT SEAMEN FOR SOME TWENTY YEARS. HE IS THE DESIGNATED PHYSICIAN FOR ALL SCANDINAVIAN AND INDIAN VESSELS TRANSITING THE CANAL. PERSONAL IMPRESSION BASED ON OBSERVATION IS THAT CARE AND TREATMENT AT DELVRAND HOSPITAL IS INFINITELY SUPERIOR TO THAT AVAILABLE AT OTHER FACILITIES AND THAT AMERICAN SEAMEN WOULD RECEIVE THE BEST MEDICAL CARE AVAILABLE LOCALLY FROM THIS INSTITUTION. SURBER. UNQUOTE
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